

A Brief History of the Florida Wildlife Federation, 1936-2012

Foreword

The description of the Florida Wildlife Federation that follows provides an overview of our activities over the past 75 years. It is not a complete review but does highlight a number of our past activities. Apologies in advance to anyone who has not been mentioned here but who provided great assistance to the Federation and conservation in Florida and, indeed, one of the Federation's great strengths has always been our ability to establish and maintain effective conservation partnerships with diverse allies. Conservation needs long term friends, and the outstanding unpaid and dedicated volunteer leaders of FWF, its Board of the Directors and our individual members and contributors have been at the core of our work throughout our history. We have also greatly benefitted from generous individual and foundation gifts and bequests. I and other staff of Florida Wildlife Federation are privileged to work for this organization. We hope you find this document is informative and a good read.

Thank you.

Manley Fuller, President

Juan Ponce de Leon was so taken with the beauty of our land he named it after the flowers of Easter. William Bartram, the naturalist who traveled through Florida in the 1770s, described it as “a glorious apartment in the sovereign palace of the Creator,” with diamond-clear springs, forests teeming with deer, rivers and lakes thick with trout, bass, and bream, and skies filled with birds: green heron, black vulture, quail, duck and turkey. Despite the establishment of cotton plantations, railway lines and towns, Florida in the 19th century was still largely as Bartram found it. In the later 1800's and early 1900's massive logging operations cut mature forests of cypress as well as longleaf, slash and other pines across the state. Some of the last-known Ivory-billed woodpeckers and Carolina parakeets were found in those old growth forests. By the 1920s and '30s, Florida's once-abundant game and fish species had started to suffer the impact of people moving south to get their little piece of paradise.

When Florida was admitted to the Union in 1845, the human population was around 60,000; by 1900, it had crept up to half a million. In the 20th century, however, we grew like kudzu, and now Florida is the 4th largest state in the nation, with nearly 19 million residents. Over the past 100 years, Florida's flora and fauna have struggled to survive in the midst of ill-planned development, polluted waters and disappearing wetlands. Semi-tropical South Florida was once a veritable Eden; now suburbs and strip malls encroach on the world's greatest natural water filtration system, highways stop the flow of the River of Grass and rivers choke under blankets of toxic algae. We have degraded and dirtied the Land of Flowers, and nearly destroyed our natural treasures: the very things which draw people to Florida in the first place.

But some who loved the old, wild Florida fought back. In the mid-1930s, sportsmen and women in various states started working together toward the common goal of preserving not just game animals and their habitats, but all of America's natural glories. In 1936-37, burgeoning interest in the conservation movement led to the founding of state wildlife federations, including the Florida Wildlife Federation (FWF). The National Wildlife Federation (NWF) was also created at this time. Pulitzer Prize-winning editorial cartoonist and environmental pioneer J.N. "Ding" Darling, after whom the National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel Island is named, was instrumental in this movement. FWF's founding president was R.M. Sheetz.

In its early years, FWF was comprised mainly of conservation-minded hunters and anglers from across the state who were dedicated, as they said, "to safeguard and defend from exploitation our priceless heritage of clean waters, rich soil, green forests, fish and wildlife." The Federation believed there should be a governmental entity to codify and enforce protections, and in 1943, under the leadership of FWF President Sam Dubon, the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission (GFC, now the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission)

was created to manage our wildlife based on science. Florida's GFC became one of only two state constitutionally-empowered wildlife agencies in the nation.

During the 1940s, the Federation worked with GFC, the state veterinarian and Governor Spessard Holland to address the state's depleted deer population. South Florida's deer herd had been slaughtered in an ill-conceived attempt to eliminate tick-borne illnesses in cattle. Deer in other areas had been over-hunted. Deer from other states, including Wisconsin and Texas, were relocated to Florida and game laws changed to protect the herd. From this victory, FWF pressed for saltwater fishing licenses (with some of the revenue dedicated to coastal research), fish management areas, soil conservation and state acquisition of land for public recreation. In 1941, Charlotte County's 60,000-acre Webb Area became the state's first public recreational area. In 1947, the JW Corbett Area in Palm Beach County was purchased for public recreation and watershed protection. That same year saw the opening of the Everglades National Park as well as publication of Marjorie Stoneman Douglas's classic *River of Grass*. Douglas effectively argued that the 'glades is not a swamp but a river system and showed how human incursion was damaging to wildlife.

In the late forties, conservation was a hot topic, more prominent than it had been since 1912 when President Teddy Roosevelt declared, "There can be no greater issue than that of conservation in this country." FWF capitalized on this renewed interest in the natural world, especially Florida's natural world, holding candidate forums and meetings. At the 1947 Outdoor Writers of America convention in St. Petersburg, Florida, FWF, led by President Ralph G. Cooksey, threw a big party complete with shooting, casting and archery exhibitions and a wild meat barbecue served by the famous waterskiing Aquamaids of Cypress Gardens. As reported by the *St. Petersburg Times* in October, 1949, women who attended FWF's convention were treated to a "Sportswomen's Dinner and Fashion Show." There was even a beauty pageant to crown a Wildlife Queen from among the young women nominated by wildlife clubs throughout the state. The

Federation under Cooksey was energetic and forward-thinking, trying to educate politicians, farmers and business leaders on issues such as water pollution and habitat destruction.

President Harry Truman, who spent a fair amount of time in Florida at the Little White House on Key West, was made the first "Life Member" by the FWF Board of Directors in 1948. The plaque (pictured here) which commemorated his membership certificate is framed with almost-heraldic carvings of ducks in flight, a swordfish and a large-mouth bass. The award was, in part, recognition of Truman's stirring dedication speech at the opening ceremony for Everglades National Park in 1947. The plaque is presently on display at the Truman Library in Independence, Missouri. |



President Harry Truman and Senator Spessard Holland.
Photo courtesy of the State Archives of Florida, Floridamemory.com

In the 1950's, Florida was booming. The state's resident population of about three million was swollen seasonally by the tourists and "snow birds" who'd fly south at the first sign of frost. New federal highways contributed to Florida's increasing popularity, putting ever more stress on the state's water, flora and fauna. FWF was all-volunteer at the time, with no paid staff. But the determined board and membership became ever more influential, fighting against the legalization of electronic fishing devices (monkey fishing) and urging passage of a variety of conservation bills to protect beaches, ensure public access to public waters, control "undesirable water vegetation," and encourage purchase of land for wildlife management. In 1958, FWF successfully argued that the few remaining Florida panthers should be placed off limits to hunters.

By the time the 1960 state election campaigns were in full swing, the Federation had enough clout that all the candidates to succeed Governor LeRoy Collins answered detailed questions on conservation issues ranging from preserving the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission's constitutional status to whether state park lands should ever be developed.

Florida was changing, and the Federation along with it. FWF began to educate a political class and a public, who assumed that all growth was good growth, on the effects of runaway dredging, draining and building. A *St. Petersburg Times* editorial of 1960, praising a federal water pollution bill, stated, "The Florida Wildlife Federation points out that the explosive growth of our cities has created a serious sewage disposal problem, while Florida's flat terrain and slow water runoff offers a special threat to health through pollution."

Sometimes the more things change, the more they stay the same. In 2012, some 52 years later, we are still battling urban and agricultural runoff in our lakes and rivers (as anyone who has seen the thick algae outbreaks on the St. Johns, the

Santa Fe and the Caloosahatchee rivers, or in many of Florida's formerly gin-clear springs, now turned green, will know).

Rachel Carson's 1962 book *Silent Spring*, the best-selling account of how dangerous pesticides kill birds and other wildlife, is often credited with igniting the modern environmental movement. In its wake, President John F. Kennedy convened a Conference on Conservation to address the problem of the pesticides which had, as Carson wrote, "the power to kill every insect, the 'good' and the 'bad,' to still the song of birds and the leaping of fish in the streams, to coat the leaves with a deadly film, and to linger on in soil - all this though the intended target may be only a few weeds or insects."

Americans in the 1960s could no longer ignore the degradation of the natural world, whether it was Ohio's Cuyahoga River, choked with so much oil and debris that it actually burned in 1969, or the massive die-off of brown pelicans throughout the Gulf coast. The Federation supported the Department of Pollution Control, a new state agency created in 1969 under Gov. Claude Kirk. Heading the department, now known as the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, was Nathaniel Pryor Reed, from Jupiter Island, who earned the undying gratitude of Floridians for stopping a jet airport being built practically in the Everglades.

Throughout the sixties, FWF advocated for agricultural interests to use their own land to store water and thereby preserve a public resource, a 1,500 acre addition to Jonathan Dickinson State Park, and the elimination of environmentally-detrimental cattle leasing on Corbett WMA. In the 1970s, FWF worked to stop the unnecessary killing of black bears by bee keepers, restoration of the Ocklawaha River and the end of development of the SST (supersonic transport) airplane. The first Earth Day was held on April 22, 1970, with celebrations all across the country. In Jacksonville, a local band called *Lynyrd Skynyrd* played to an enthusiastic crowd of proto-eco-warriors who would later be able to boast that they'd seen Skynyrd before "Free Bird." In Washington, public sentiment moved President Richard Nixon and Congress to create the

Environmental Protection Agency (1970) and to pass what we now refer to as the Clean Air Act (1970) and the Clean Water Act (1972).

In the 60's and 70's, Central Florida dramatically changed with the growth of the Space Coast and the coming of Disney World. In 1971, John C. "Johnny" Jones, a master plumber and hunter who grew up in and around the Everglades, became Executive Director of FWF. He and his wife Mariana worked tirelessly to protect "the real Florida," the natural Florida they loved. In the 1970s, FWF, succeeded in many conservation initiatives including:

- Passage of the Environmental and Endangered Lands (EEL) bill to provide funding for state land acquisitions.
- Following a statewide conference on water and environmental issues called by Gov. Reubin Askew in 1971, passage of the Environmental Land and Water Management Act.
- Passage of the Comprehensive Planning Act and the Land Conservation Act.
- Outlawing of non-biodegradable fish traps and establishment of game fish status for snook.
- Commencement of the start of the GFC Reserve Officer program.
- Protection for the black bear starting with ending bear hunting in the Ocala National Forest under the leadership of FWF President Tommy Needham.
- Commencement, with the strong support of FWF President Calvin Stone, of a campaign to establish Big Cypress National Preserve, which was finally achieved in 1974.
- Protection of the Devil's Millhopper in Alachua County (our first state geological site).
- Opposition to red mangrove destruction on Marco Island.

- Advocacy for the banning of lead shot in waterfowl hunting due to lead poisoning of waterfowl and birds of prey.

In 1972, Tallahassee lawmakers passed the Florida Water Resources Act, which was the basis for the creation of the five Water Management Districts (South, Southwest, St. Johns River, Suwannee River and Northwest). These Districts not only focus on providing potable water to the public, but also on environmental restoration, land protection and public education about water issues. Significantly, the South Florida Water Management District began efforts to repair the years of damage done to the Everglades' ecosystem. Since the 1970's, FWF has strongly supported the overall direction of the Districts' mission, though at times has opposed certain actions deemed harmful to the environment. As recently as the past two years, FWF and other conservation organizations have attempted to stem the gutting of District budgets, a move that dramatically impairs their conservation work.

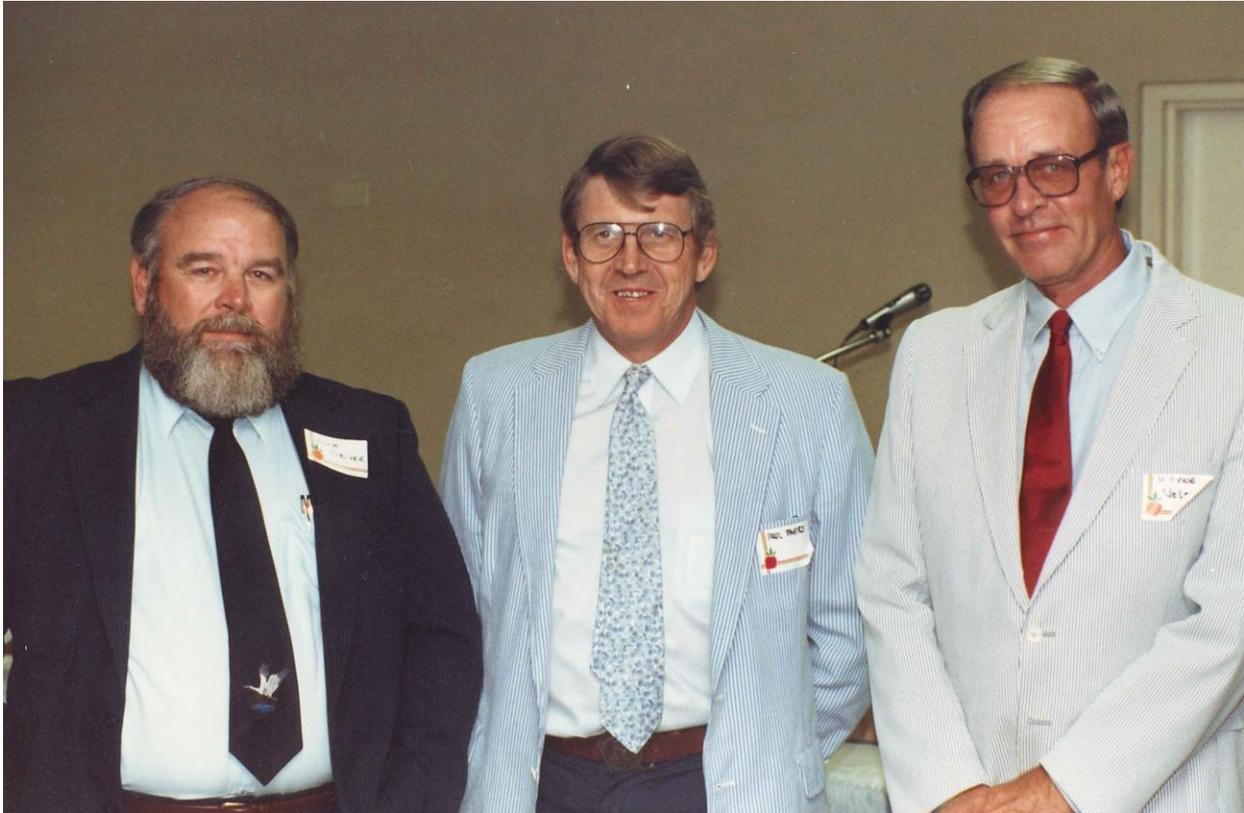
Unfortunately, the 1970s were not a period of unmitigated environmental success. In 1971, the US Army Corps of Engineers finished channelizing the Kissimmee River. This ill-judged scheme, authorized by Congress back in 1954, led to the loss of 90% of the local bird population and the shunting of millions of gallons of dirty water straight into Lake Okeechobee - just as FWF had predicted. Wetland acreage dropped from 50,000 to 5,000 and a 103 mile long meandering natural wonder was turned into a 56 mile long, 30' deep ditch. By 1976, however, backed by FWF, Congress reversed itself and passed the Kissimmee River Restoration Act, attempting to mitigate environmental damage done in the name of flood control. The goal of restoring 43 miles of river and 40,000 acres of wetlands is still a work in progress but we can clearly see a return of fish and wildlife as long segments of the 'ditch' has been converted back to oxbows, providing better habitat for fish and wildlife, and for outdoor recreationists from duck hunters and anglers to bird watchers.

The 1970s also saw the one-third completed Cross Florida Barge Canal finally stopped, though it would take until 1990 to finally get this lamentable project de-authorized by Congress. The eastern end of the canal is now the Marjorie Harris Carr Greenway. As the Ocklawaha River still suffers the adverse effects of the canal, FWF and others have for many years since have spoken out for restoration of the river and its designation as a Wild and Scenic River. To accomplish this, the Rodman Dam must be breached. Recently, at our urging, the federal government has agreed to an assessment of the effect of the dam on rare species such as the shortnose sturgeon and the manatee. Restoring this stretch of river will also restore 10,000 acres of wetland forest habitat and rehabilitate springs, and provide for outdoor recreational opportunities including excellent river fishing, boating, canoeing and hunting.

Johnny Jones and FWF racked up a remarkable string of victories in the 1970s and early 1980s. FWF didn't win every time, of course, but it always helped to raise public consciousness about endangered species, exotic invasive plants and ozone depletion caused by chlorofluorocarbons. In 1977, FWF hosted the Conference on Florida's Endangered Lands and Vanishing Wildlife. Jones was particularly concerned with the Everglades and held meetings, sometimes in his own backyard (FWF headquarters at this time was his and Mariana's home in West Palm Beach). Along with the celebrated Marjory Stoneman Douglas and Arthur Marshall, a wildlife biologist called "the Apostle of the Everglades," they drafted a plan to stop the destruction of the River of Grass. Jones presented their ideas to Gov. Bob Graham in 1983, and soon thereafter the "Save Our Everglades" campaign was born. According to the Everglades Foundation, Jones successfully lobbied 66 environmental bills through the Florida Legislature. Indeed, Johnny Jones was described as Florida's "most effective environmental lobbyist of the 1970's".

America in the early 1980s was not blessed with especially strong environmental leadership nationally. Florida fared better with Bob Graham as our

governor and with U.S. Senator Lawton Chiles as champion of Big Cypress National Preserve. The Florida Wildlife Federation became one of the original members of the Everglades Coalition, and one of Jones's final campaigns with FWF was highlighting threats to water quality in Lake Okeechobee. Also working on this effort were FWF award winners Scott Driver, Wayne Nelson and Dr. Paul Parks (*pictured*).



From left to right: Scott Driver, Paul Parks and Wayne Nelson

Johnny retired from FWF in 1986 and was honored by many organizations including induction into FWF's Hall of Fame along with his wife Mariana, whose incredible assistance over the years contributed greatly to his work. FWF also successfully pursued other projects throughout Florida. FWF directors Sarah Bailey, Steve O'Hara, Jerry Schatz, Tim Keyser, Dennis Bayer, Jack Stanley, Larry Harris and other FWF members championed conservation in Northeast Florida. An

excellent example of their success is the Guana Wildlife Management Area and State Park, which is a priceless natural treasure and recreation area protected in large measure by their hard work.

In 1986, the Federation hired Manley Fuller to replace Jones. Fuller had worked for NWF as Southeastern Wetlands and Wildlife specialist, initially as its managing director. Fuller trained as a wildlife biologist and plant ecologist in North Carolina and was mentored in the ways of non profits and wildlife federation affiliates by his friend and southeastern regional leader of National Wildlife Federation, Charlie Shaw, who had met him as a graduate student studying alligators and working in wetlands. Fuller fell in love with the flatlands of Florida when, for his seventh birthday, his parents took him to Ross Allen's Reptile Institute at Silver Springs where he saw the fabled Big George, a giant alligator, and met the fabled proprietor. The title "Executive Director" was retired in honor of Johnny Jones and Fuller was named President.

In 1987, Richard Tillis, an environmental education leader in Florida, was the FWF chair. The Board of Directors decided to move the Federation's office from West Palm Beach to Tallahassee, which was accomplished with the great assistance of members Ralph and Peggy Johnson. Moreover, the Johnsons and others helped raise funds to cover relocation and other office start up costs. Due to the generous donation of Federation member Joe Farish, FWF now had its own office building located near the state capitol.

In the late 1980's, FWF continued to work on a myriad of conservation issues. The organization worked in Florida's Panhandle to protect and later establish Topsail Hill State Park in Walton County and to protect the integrity of Point Washington State Forest. FWF opposed oil drilling close to our shores and participated in legal actions alongside Earthjustice and the State of Florida against Coastal Petroleum's plans to drill in Florida's Gulf Waters. Ultimately, the company's lease was purchased back by Florida with Governor Bush and Florida Cabinet support in 2005. The Federation opposed polluted water discharge in the

Holeyland and Rotenberger Management Areas in South Florida as part of Everglades' restoration. FWF's current Chair Jim Schuette, working as a biologist in the 1990s managing these areas, called attention to the rapid expansion of invasive cattails in the Holeyland and Rotenberger Management Areas. FWF fought against dirty water coming from Georgia which was polluting the Ochlockonee River, and against Palm Beach County's effort to drain wetlands for a new airport near the Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge. We opposed the dewatering of the Loxahatchee River's headwaters and have worked against urban sprawl, as well as against unnecessary new roads which accelerate habitat fragmentation.

Following the move to Tallahassee, FWF initiated new education and membership programs. The Life Membership program established in the late 1980s now boasts over 450 members all of whom receive a commissioned wildlife art print by Ben Essenberg. In collaboration with University of Florida professor Franklin Percival and artist Gregg Murray, we raised over \$100,000 for wildlife research through the "Art for Alligators" program. FWF ardently supported the federal Coastal Barrier Resources Act to help stem governmental subsidization of misguided coastal development. Interestingly, the Congressional parent of the Coastal Barrier Resources Act, Congressman Tom Evans, now serves on FWF's board and continues to promote barrier island protection.

FWF successfully promoted the establishment of the Timucuan Preserve and pushed for federal laws mandating Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs). We worked toward the elimination of peat mining in north Florida, passage of the Florida Non-Game Act and introduction of the Florida Turkey Stamp to support wild turkey management. We also helped pass the Surface Water Improvement and Management Act to promote water quality, particularly in Lake Okeechobee, Biscayne Bay, Indian River Lagoon, Tampa Bay, Lake Apopka and the St. Johns River. FWF helped found and still supports FWC's Florida's Wildlife Alert program to stem poaching. FWF board member Jenny Brock presently serves as the current Chair of Wildlife Alert.

FWF, working in Tallahassee and Washington, successfully lobbied for the “Rails to Trails” legislation and joined with Florida Defenders of the Environment to halt Ocala’s plan to dump raw sewage into the Marshall Swamp. We also pushed for the creation of a statewide Environmental Crimes Unit.

Shortly following the opening of the Tallahassee office, Rick Farren, author of a number of outdoors and fishing books, columnist for the *Tallahassee Democrat* newspaper, and writer and editor for *Florida Sportsman* magazine, joined the staff working with Dianne Godfrey, who served as office manager. Rick was the writer and publisher of FWF’s *Florida Fish and Wildlife News*. He and his wife Claudia also helped to start FWF’s popular and successful boat and car sweepstakes.

FWF worked on preservation of South Florida’s critically endangered fauna, such as the key deer population which had dropped to 250 individuals. Attorneys (and FWF Board Members) David White and Henry Morgenstern, along with Richard Grosso, challenged misguided growth in Monroe County to benefit the Key deer in a case that went on for many years. As GFC Regional Director Dan Dunford had once observed, “The Florida panther and other species are being eliminated by habitat loss and cars.”

1990 was a watershed year. With the backing of Governor Bob Martinez and FWF, Florida’s legislature passed our renowned Preservation 2000 initiative, providing for the acquisition and protection of more than 1.27 million acres of environmentally sensitive land over a 10-year period. In 2000, it gave way to the Florida Forever program, which put more land under conservation. Now almost ten million acres have been saved from development for wildlife habitat, water quality and quantity, open space and public enjoyment. As a result of grassroots organizing, lobbying, education, government cooperation and a lot of effort by environmental and recreation groups, as of 2012 almost 30% of Florida’s land area is protected. Importantly, these land protection efforts, at least until recently, have been supported by leaders of both political parties.

In 1991, Diane Hines, current Vice-President for Administration, began ably shepherding the organization's daily operations and many other functions critical to FWF's success. David Gluckman served as FWF's legislative lobbyist working with Dr. Paul Parks, and focused on Everglades Restoration, Lake Okeechobee protection, water quality and reducing mercury in fish and wildlife. Dr. Park's work was aided by the generosity of the EO Dunn Foundation, and later the Turner Foundation.

In 1994, Nancy Payton joined FWF's Southwest Field Office. This office, sustained initially by the generosity of the Harder Foundation, has achieved tremendous success with the widely-recognized efforts of Ms. Payton, the legal expertise of Tom Reese and the selfless efforts of Board member Franklin Adams. Indeed, this office has facilitated the protection of over 100,000 acres of critical panther habitat and participated in a number of other successful campaigns such as Conservation Collier.

In 1996, Lynn Jones came on board as Membership Coordinator and continues to oversee approximately 60,000 members and supporters, and Pat Pearson began her work on behalf of backyard wildlife habitats and environmental education.

FWF fought for and continues to defend the public's right to public lands, including sovereignty submerged land. We advocated for Lake Apopka restoration, working with local leaders such as FWF Director Jim Thomas, and were a founding member of the Save our Sealife Campaign that removed gill nets from our marine waters in 1994 by amending the state constitution. We also helped establish project WILD to educate school children about our environment and we attempted to make polluters pay to clean up the Everglades.

By 2000, Florida's population had increased to nearly 16 million. The year before, the state merged the Marine Fisheries Commission with the GFC to create the new Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). FWF continued to grow as well. In 2004, supported by generous grants from the Surdna and Dunn

Foundations, FWF hired Sarah Owen Gledhill, who opened FWF's Northeast Office. She has distinguished herself in the areas of opposition to urban sprawl, growth management, sound coastal policy and the expansion and connection of protected lands, especially those benefitting the Florida black bear. Tom Reese has also provided legal assistance to the Northeast office. Our Northeast office has received valuable support from local FWF members. Also in 2004, noted wildlife artist Peter R. Gerbert began his association with FWF, and in 2005, Preston Robertson was hired as General Counsel and Vice-President for Conservation. Robertson had previously served on FWF'S Board of Directors, and had worked for the Conservation Fund, the old Game and Freshwater Fish Commission and the new Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission as assistant general counsel. We were able in large measure to bring Robertson on board owing to a generous grant from a conservation-minded member and entrepreneur. Robertson continues to provide us with invaluable assistance on advocacy, conservation, lobbying and legal matters.

The Federation is involved with efforts to reform the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers into less of a dredging and damming enterprise. Fuller served on the board of the Corps Reform Network and now represents FWF on the America's Great Waters Network Board. FWF scored a number of legislative successes in the 2000's, including increasing penalties for fish and wildlife law violators, increasing recreational license prices to enhance management, tying license fees to the Consumer Price Index, creation of the first deer stamp for white-tail deer management, gopher tortoise conservation and increases in recreational permit fees to meet inflation.

FWF prefers to work within the political system, but has shown that it is not afraid to go to court. The Federation sued the Environmental Protection Agency over the use of fenthion, a killer of birdlife, and initiated litigation to protect water quality in Lake Okeechobee and preserve the right of citizens to seek legal redress over pollution and growth management issues. FWF and other concerned organizations, represented by the Everglades Law Center, forced the Scripps

Biomedical Institute to halt construction of its Florida headquarters on sensitive land at Mecca Farms right next to the Corbett Wildlife Area and to relocate to a more appropriate site. The project would have opened rural and natural areas of Palm Beach County to urban sprawl and highway construction. FWF has also been involved in two landmark Clean Water Act cases, successfully represented by Earthjustice. In a 2007 lawsuit over the pumping of agricultural waste water into Lake Okeechobee, a federal judge ruled in FWF's favor thereby compelling the purchase of Everglades land as part of overall restoration. That project is still in its early stages. FWF and other conservationists also prevailed against EPA in another litigation, mandating that numeric standards be used to determine if a river or a lake is impaired and is presently involved in long term federal litigation as to stopping the pollution of the Everglades.

As Pogo, the wisecracking Okeefenokee Swamp possum in Walt Kelly's great comic strip, once declared: "We have met the enemy and he is us." As to the Okeefenokee, FWF working with allies and the US Forest Service has largely succeeded in protecting the Pinhook Swamp which joins the Osceola National Forest to the Okeefenokee in Georgia. We have worked closely with conservation allies such as the late Judy Hancock, author Janisse Ray, Larry Thompson, Bob Simons, Larry Harris and many others to protect this property, and used a complex land exchange to further the protection and consolidation of the management of Osceola National Forest.

In 2006, Jay Liles joined FWF as a policy consultant in the areas of clean energy, costal policy and insurance reform in high hazard, low-lying areas. Jay also provides invaluable assistance to us in our Gulf of Mexico and Everglades' restoration initiatives in Tallahassee and Washington, D.C.

In 2008, the Federation spearheaded the Conservation Easement Constitutional Amendment, which was approved by nearly 70% of voters and now makes Florida first in the nation as to state financial benefits for private land conservation easements. There are presently 573,000 acres protected under

perpetual conservation easements in Florida. Due to the generosity of the Sprinkle family, FWF has been able to increase our land conservation efforts and was able to purchase the River Preserve in Leon County on the scenic Ochlockonee River and protect one mile of river frontage. This land is used for children's fishing events and by disabled recreationalists to inspire environmental education.

On April 20, 2010 the BP *Deepwater Horizon* oil platform exploded, which not only killed 11 workers, but caused the outpouring of approximately five million barrels of crude oil into the Gulf of Mexico. It was the biggest petroleum-related disaster in United States history, and its destructive impact on seagrass beds, marshes, birds and fish, not to mention Florida's multi-billion dollar tourist industry, is still being felt. Before the disaster, the Federation had created the Save our Seas, Beaches and Shores campaign seeking to amend the state constitution to prohibit oil drilling in our state marine waters, and urges the Legislature to allow Floridians to vote on this critical issue. Our campaign continues.

FWF staff and board members serve on a myriad of committees including those dealing with public recreation on the Big Cypress, large scale conservation management plans in Central Florida, forestry practices and wildlife management. As founding members of Get Outdoors, Florida!, and the Future of Hunting in Florida, we and our allies in the conservation and health fields advocate for more outdoor activities for our young people not only to promote physical fitness, but to educate them and inspire a sense of stewardship over our natural resources. We are heavily involved across the state and in Washington, DC, on energy and conservation issues, including discouraging destructive coastal development, the advancement of renewable energy and the expansion of the use of perpetual conservation easements through tax relief. Due to the generosity of FWF member Tim 'OBrien and other concerned Floridians, we also fund grants for University of Florida wildlife students via our Scholarship Fund. We also carry on demanding of

our leaders that they adequately fund federal, state and local environmental land protection and management so as to benefit future Floridians.

FWF's Board has recently committed itself to financially support a campaign to secure long-term funding for Florida's conservation lands programs. We also ardently resist inappropriate surplusing of state or water management district lands. FWF is working hard in favor of federal legislation to have monies from the BP *Deepwater Horizon* oil disaster be spent in the Gulf States on ecological restoration. We also are advocating for full funding for the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund and recently helped get the Everglades, St John's and Apalachicola named as America's Great Waters. In the Everglades, FWF's staff receives high quality volunteer assistance in the policy arena from retired Miami Herald writer Martha Musgrove, who serves on our FWF's Board and with Fuller, is our representative with the Everglades Coalition and Everglades Foundation

The Federation's work has won it recognition. In 2006, FWF was named Affiliate of the Year by National Wildlife Federation. We are often called one of the most effective environmental organizations in the nation. In 2010, FWF was profiled in an *Oxford American* magazine article by Diane Roberts: "They're the polluters' worst nightmare: Greens with guns. They hunt, but always eat what they kill. They work within the political system, but they're not afraid to go to court. They punch above their weight in government circles, operating on a budget smaller than your average lobbyist's bar tab. And despite Florida's best efforts to drain, pave and overpopulate itself to death, they are hell-bent on saving it."

FWF Chairs of the Board/aka Presidents, since 1950:

Ralph G. Cooksey
Henry C. Douglas
Dr. H.R. Wilber
Sam H. Dubon
Hubert W. Robertson
Thomas W. Needham
W. Don Southwell
William F. Theobald
John C. Jones
Calvin R. Stone
C. Richard Tillis
Walter G. Brandon
William M. Blake
Timothy Keyser
Jim Scanland
R. Jack Stanley
David White
Steve O'Hara
Lynn Alan Thompson
Bob Reid
Jenny Brock
Linda Stanley
James Schuette

FWF Hall of Fame inductees, recognized for their dedication to the conservation of Florida's fish and wildlife:

Johnny and Mariana Jones
Arthur R. Marshall, Jr.
Ralph and Peggy Johnson
Col. Robert M. Brantly
William "Bill" Blake
BF "Biff" Lampton
Robert Stossel, Sr.
Marjorie Harris Carr
Robert J. "Jack" Stanley
Sarah Bailey
Attorney General Bob Butterworth
Louise Ireland Humphrey
Allen L. Egbert
J. Stephen O'Hara, Jr.
George Dalrymple
Governor Charlie Crist
Walter G. Brandon, Sr.
Dr. Paul C. Parks
Dr. David S. Anthony

Nathaniel P. Reed

FWF Conservationists of the Year:

1993 Leroy Wright
1994 Freddy Fisikelli
1995 Karl Wickstrom
1996 Carol M. Browner
1997 Attorney General Bob Butterworth and David Guest, Esq.
1998 Patti Webster
1999 Richard Grosso, Esq.
2000 Senator Jack Latvala
2001 John "Art" Marshall
2002 Shannon Estenoz
2003 Attorney General Robert F. Milligan
2004 Mark Glisson
2005 Karen Ahlers
2006 Richard Grosso, Robert Hartsell, Lisa Interlandi (Everglades Law Center)
2007 Ray Judah
2008 Ellen Peterson
2009 Brian Yablonski and Richard Corbett, FWC Commissioners
2011 David Rauschkolb

FWF Issue Resolutions:

1980's: support for Statewide Environmental Crimes Unit; replacement of Matanzas Bridge in environmentally sound manner (St. Johns County); Support for a holistic approach to Everglades Restoration; support for increased camping opportunities at JW Corbett WMA (Palm Beach County); oppose landfill/road in headwaters of Durbin Creek (Duval County); support federal bills to create National Center for biological conservation at the University of Florida (Alachua County); **1990's:** support ratification of North American Free Trade Agreement, but with environmental protection; support Save our Everglades constitutional amendments; oppose Blockbuster development (Dade and Broward Counties); support sea turtle protection by lighting and other alterations (Volusia and other counties); support designating the St. Johns River as an American Heritage River; urge Florida DOT to lessen impacts of SR 20 widening (Alachua County); urge Governor and Cabinet to enforce the Save our Sealife constitutional Amendment (marine net limitation); support restoration of the Ocklawaha River and removal of Rodman Dam (Putnam County); **2000 to date:** oppose construction of toll road over Indian River Lagoon (Brevard County); oppose construction of dam on the Yellow River (Okaloosa County); support establishment of shrimp nursery in parts of Franklin and Wakulla Counties; oppose new interstate between Dothan, Alabama and Panama City, Florida; support comprehensive study of alternative energy use in Florida; support continuation of FSU marine lab; support Dry Tortugas closed area if closely evaluated (Monroe County); oppose construction of road in Gardner-Cobb Marsh (Osceola County); oppose Trap/Neuter/Release for feral cats; support Research Natural Area (RNA) at Dry Tortugas; support reasonable increases in hunting and fishing licenses; oppose water withdrawal from St. Johns River; support increased management of Florida's deer herd